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AUTHOR Eiseman, Jeffrey W.; Lippitt, Peggy
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ABSTRACT

The first semester of a cross-age teaching project is evaluated in this report. Three adjacent inner city public schools, an elementary, junior high, and high school, were involved. Thirty-three teachers in the schools received 68 older students as educational agents to provide individual attention to their own students for approximately 4 half-hours per week. Training was provided the various helping participants, e.g., receiving teachers, olders, and seminar leaders. This evaluation is based on questionnaires from 25 receiving teachers and 29 olders and interviews with the 5 seminar leaders, 3 sending teachers, and 3 olders. The report deals separately with each element of the program: the youngers, or learners; the tutors, or olders; the receiving teachers; and, the seminar leaders. Each section reports on selection criteria and either the effects of the program or reactions to it. The evaluation concludes that teachers are provided with a new way to cope with individual pupil needs. For the learners, academic achievement gains were notable, as were positive shifts in attitudes toward learning and self. The tutors benefiting from experiencing concrete evidence of their usefulness and importance to others, both younger children and adults. (Author/DJB)

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OLDERS-YOUNGERS PROJECT EVALUATION:

Covering the First Semester

Jeffrey W. Eiseman

Peggy Lippitt

February, 1966

This report has been prepared especially for
the Stern Family Fund and the Detroit Board
of Education.

Progress Report: February, 1966

in Conjunction with Olders-Youngers Project Evaluation

Covering the First Semester

Demonstration Project on Use of Older Children as Educational Agents
with Younger Children (called the Olders-Youngers Project)

Program Director

Ronald Lippitt, Center for Research on Utilization of Scientific
Knowledge, Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor,
Michigan.

Project Team

Jeffrey Eiseman, Peggy Lippitt, Marie Basalone, George Sproule

The Schools Involved

This is a progress report covering the first semester (1965-66) at
three public schools in Detroit which are cooperating with the project as
field sites. These three schools--Central High School, Durfee Junior High
School, and Roosevelt Elementary School--form an inner-city educational
complex. They are adjacent to each other with no streets intervening.

Rationale for the Project

Young children identify strongly with older children. They adopt many
of their elders' basic attitudes and patterns of behavior.

Sometimes elders pass on some of their negative attitudes toward school.
They can be asked to help. When elders are taught to understand their
potential effect on youngsters, their attitudes toward school can be changed.
Elders can become motivated to pass on to youngsters positive attitudes toward
learning. If they are provided with adequate training and supervision, they
can become skillful and successful educational helpers. They can see them-
selves as important and useful.

Description of the Project

In the "Olders" - "Youngers" Project, each supervising or "receiving
teacher" chooses areas where she would like assistance. She may have two or
three students in her class who can profit from individual attention. She
may have one or two groups who need help to carry out their special project.
She and a "sending teacher" select older students capable of providing the
kind of help she deems appropriate.

The elders are trained in three ways. First, they participate in weekly seminar sessions led by a trained instructor. In these sessions, they learn teaching techniques and human relations skills. They also exchange ideas about their helping experiences. They learn, for example, what younger children are like and how to turn their mistakes into successful learning experiences. Second, each older meets with the receiving teacher once a week to discuss his progress. At that time, the receiving teacher gives instructions for the elders to carry out during the following week. Third, during the older's first assignment, the seminar leader or other "at-the-elbow helper" is present. The adult's role here is to give encouragement or suggestions whenever there is any need for this type of support.

The elders meet with their "youngsters" a half hour per day three or four times a week. These helping assignments range from drills on spelling words, multiplication tables, and Latin vocabulary words to assistance in sewing, making bookcases, and shooting basketballs, to helping a group publish a class newspaper.

The distribution of helping students and faculty was as follows:

		To			Total Number	Trainers
		Central	Durfee	Roosevelt		
From	Central	18	12	6	36	1
	Durfee	--	8	14	22	2
	Roosevelt	--	--	10	10	2
						5
Total No. Received		18	20	30	Total Students } 68	
Receiving Teachers		7	11	15	Total Receiving Teacher 33	
					Total Faculty Involved } 38	

Hoped for Benefits of the Project

A. For the younger:

1. Either individual help with schoolwork with which he's experiencing difficulty or an opportunity for an enrichment experience which he otherwise would not have;
2. The experience of a positive relationship with an older child;

3. The opportunity to learn in a concrete way how schoolwork done well now will help him do well later;
4. Greater self-confidence and, consequently, greater class participation; and
5. In general, an improved attitude toward learning.

B. For the older:

1. The recognition that he can make a constructive contribution toward someone else's welfare even though he's not full grown;
2. The experience of a positive relationship with a younger child;
3. Having cooperation with teachers turn out successfully;
4. A pre-professional apprenticeship--a taste of teaching and related helping professions;
5. An improved attitude toward his own learning as he helps others learn; and
6. Training in human relations.

C. For the supervising or receiving teacher:

1. Satisfaction from making an important contribution to the education of "her older students";
2. The knowledge that her diagnostic and creative skills are being used to provide individual attention that she herself doesn't have time to give; and
3. More time and energy to devote to the needs of the rest of the class.

Inservice Training of Seminar Leaders (Training of Trainers Sessions)

Six hours of training were given to the "seminar leaders." It was these faculty members who were responsible for coordinating the program and leading the seminar sessions. The training sessions included:

1. Ways of orienting the olders to the program: introducing them to the rationale for olders helping youngers; discussions about what youngers are like; making youngers feel important and courageous enough to tackle problems; appropriate expectations for different age levels; techniques of teaching youngers to help themselves; and ways of insuring that the olders have adequate communication with their receiving teachers.
2. Techniques of conducting group discussions, including census taking, case interviewing, and acting-out situations.

Future Plans

During the spring semester, as the demonstration continues, a filmstrip is being produced describing the project. Also training materials are being created which can be used to diffuse this activity to other schools and school systems.

In the late spring and early fall, several dissemination conferences with school leaders within the Detroit school system and with leaders from neighboring school systems will be held. Followup inquiry will study the degree and quality of the adoption and adaptation of cross-age practices.

A final step will be to prepare the materials for national distribution.

Evaluation

The evaluation of the demonstration activities of the past semester is attached as the major part of this report. Evaluation is also being secured on the success of the two pilot demonstrations last year, and the one current diffusion project in Public School #146 in Brooklyn.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Introduction	1
I. <u>The Youngers</u> (the Learners)	1
A. Selection criteria	1
1. Poor grades	1
2. Good grades	2
3. Other factors	2
4. Special situations	2
B. Effects of the project on the youngers	2
1. Performance changes	2
a. Academic	2
b. Other behavior change	3
2. Attitude change	4
a. Toward learning	4
b. Toward receiving help	5
c. Toward himself	5
d. Toward others	6
II. <u>The Olders</u> (the Tutors)	6
A. Selection criteria	6
B. What the high school olders did	6
1. Subject matter taught	6
2. Allocation of time	6
3. How the olders saw it	7
C. Competence of the olders	8
1. Background of the high school olders	8
a. Academic average	8
b. College plans	8
2. Skill demands at the various levels	8
a. Subject matter skills	8
b. Interpersonal skills	8
3. The ability of the olders to meet the various skill demands	10
a. In elementary school	10
b. In junior and senior high school	10
c. Recommendation	12
D. Effects of the project on the olders	12
1. What they missed when tutoring	12
2. Effects noted by the seminar leaders	13
3. Effects noted by the high school olders themselves	13
a. On their ideas about teaching	13
b. On their ideas about youngers	14
c. On themselves	15
E. The olders' suggestions for improving the course	16
III. <u>The Receiving Teachers</u> (Teachers who received olders to help their youngers)	16
A. Selection criteria	16
B. Their reactions to the project	17
1. Problems faced	17
2. Satisfactions derived	19
IV. <u>The Seminar Leaders</u> (School personnel who provided pre-service and in-service training for the olders)	20
A. Selection criteria	20
B. Their reactions to the project	22
1. Problems faced	22
2. Comments on early reservations	23
3. Satisfactions derived	23
V. <u>Summary</u>	23

Olders-Youngers Project Evaluation:

Covering the First Semester

Introduction

A. Source of Information

This evaluation is based on both questionnaires and interviews. The questionnaires were filled out by twenty-five receiving teachers (six in Central High, ten in Durfee Junior High, and nine in Roosevelt), and twenty-nine Central High School olders. Half-hour interviews were held with all five seminar leaders (one in the high school, two in the junior high, and two in the elementary school), with three of the four sending teachers (all in the elementary school), and with three high school olders.

B. Format

The information presented in this report has been organized in two major ways. Sometimes it is presented in paragraph form, other times in outline form. All comments which are single spaced are direct quotes. The table of contents was included to make selective reading possible.

I. The Youngers (the Learners)

A. Selection criteria

1. Poor grades - Receiving teachers reported a variety of reasons for choosing poor students. Some chose those with the least interest, ability, or willingness to work. Some chose those who weren't responding in class or who weren't doing their homework. Students were chosen who were judged to be underachievers, or as one teacher put it, who didn't know how to take advantage of their resources. Sometimes teachers had been successful in giving certain of their students individual help and they selected those who they knew could gain from more individual attention.

2. Good grades - Some teachers chose average students who had higher aspirations. Some chose anyone who asked to receive help. Other teachers purposely chose their best students who were ahead of the class and losing interest.

3. Other factors - Some teachers deliberately avoided including students with discipline problems. Some used attendance as a basis--both ways: Students with good attendance were included because they could be counted on to show up when the elders arrived; students who had been absent because of sickness were chosen for a small number of sessions in order that they be helped to catch up; students who had continual attendance problems were included in the hopes that their attendance would improve. Some teachers in the junior and senior high schools consulted with homeroom teachers before making their selection.

4. Special situations - Three teachers experimented by including students for special reasons. One student had both a very short span of attention and a speech defect. Another, not only was included because he had academic problems, but also because he was a behavior problem: Among other things, he lacked any sign of courtesy. Finally, a girl was included who was oversized; she was quite withdrawn and her work suffered accordingly.

B. Effects of the project on the youngsters

1. Performance changes

a. Academic

(1) Academic improvements - Practically everyone indicated their youngsters gained academically. Here are some anecdotes:

Some who got only 7, 8, or 5 out of a possible 18 spelling words right, when tutored by an older now get 16, 17, and 18 right.

The child who showed most improvement in eight weeks of spelling tests at the beginning of the semester received only one paper with all correct; papers had 5 wrong, 7, 10 wrong sometimes. Now of the tests for five weeks, 4 tests are all correct, 1 test with only 1 wrong. The last two weeks, she has been working on her own and has had all right, showing she can keep it up on her own.

Three of my students now have papers on the board when they never have had papers on the board before.

I have seen more growth from the children getting help from these tutors than from those who have been taking remedial arithmetic and remedial reading after school. That's a very significant statement, because these classes are being taught by some of our best teachers but there is something about the individual instruction that I think has succeeded more than even a small group of 14 or 16 youngsters after school.

The reading skill of three of my students improved to the point where promotion is possible.

(2) Turning in homework and other written assignments -

Some youngsters had consistently refrained from turning in assignments until their involvement with the project.

(3) Greater class participation - This was a frequent

comment. And one teacher said about her younger:

She became so extroverted that I found myself asking her to give others an opportunity.

(4) Greater effort

(5) Does extra work outside of class on his own

(6) Knowing how to study

b. Other behavior change

(1) Better attendance - Several students began coming to

school more often and on time. One older wrote:

I feel that my student gained something, because one time I heard her say she got an 80% on a test and she used to didn't come (sic) when test day came up, or be so late for class that she couldn't take the test. And now she's doing her homework and going to her class.

And an older helping in shop said: In the beginning, I noticed my younger didn't want to do anything if he could help it. After he turned in his first job and saw that it would bring his own grade up, he started to work a little bit harder. Toward the end he was working very strongly. On the last day nobody else in the shop was working except my younger and another boy. This, to me, showed improvement for him.

(2) Less tension - And as a sidelight, one teacher reported:

One girl has been pressured at home according to her mother's statement. She needed a relaxed atmosphere in which to work. Her grades improved, her stammering lessened.

(3) Less fooling around; more able to settle down and work

(4) Opened up

(5) Ability to express himself more clearly

(6) Less stammering

(7) Greater awareness of his problem

(8) Better grooming (this comment was made by a few

teachers and almost always involved a helping situation

in which the older and younger were of opposite sex).

2. Attitude change

a. Toward learning

(1) Greater interest

(2) Better attitude

(3) More willingness to repeat work done poorly

b. Toward receiving help--one teacher wrote:

Neither youngster gained very much until they realized that the other students in the class envied them.

- an older wrote:

My learner was asked to write a paper on his opinion of being tutored. He commented that he thought he was benefitting from the sessions and he wanted to continue. He liked having extra attention and someone to push him a little to strive for better grades. When he found out that he had made a bad grade, he knew why and he tried to do a little better when he was given a second chance.

- one elementary school teacher wrote of a youngster who became jealous (fortunately this case was the only one reported):

We tried taking him out of the helping situation to make room for another youngster. He promptly reverted to poor spelling and serious behavior problems. He is sorry his helper is leaving but he probably won't misbehave as she is leaving the room and not working with anyone else. He doesn't share well.

- a teacher said:

The children are all very eager for help from the older.

c. Toward himself

- (1) Greater self-confidence (Several teachers made this comment
- (2) Greater self-respect
- (3) Better self-image
- (4) Pride in his progress; pride in his accomplishments
- (5) The hope he can become like his older

d. Toward others

- (1) Improved attitude toward his family
- (2) More respect for others

II. The Olders (the Tutors)

A. Selection criteria

1. In elementary school, the four sending teachers chose their better students. One teacher decided to experiment by sending a girl who was frequently absent. He had an alternate ready for the times she missed.

2. In junior high school, scheduling complications had created a class to improve the reading skills of its students (the students were neither retarded nor advanced, just victims of the scheduling complications). The junior high boys who were olders were taken from here. Also, under somewhat similar circumstances, a social problems class was created; it was the source of the junior high girl olders.

3. In high school, two psychology courses were already in existence. One of them took on the project as its major activity.

B. What the high school olders did

1. Subject matter taught - Seventy-five per cent of the high school olders helped with either English (or reading), spelling, or mathematics. The others helped in history, biology, social studies, and shop.

2. Allocation of time - When an older started working with an assigned younger, he would deliberately spend some time asking the younger questions about his or her interests. He did so to build rapport and establish an atmosphere conducive to learning. Most of the time was spent

working: Helping his younger solve problems, understand concepts, practice skills, review homework, and so on. Occasionally, the receiving teacher would ask the older to concentrate on trying to improve the younger's attitude toward learning.

3. How the olders saw it - The olders were clever and showed remarkable insight. Some took their younger to visit the school library. One older-younger pair wrote stories about each other and the things they had done. Then the older read the younger's story aloud and gave his story to the younger so that the younger could have a turn. One older and her very shy younger read stories to each other over the telephone. A creative older was given a younger who had displayed resistance to reading. The older brought in joke books and comic books. He eventually drew cartoons and had the younger write stories for them.

Here are some of the older's own statements:

I started talking about everyday things like what she did, then tried to apply American History of the past into the future. That way she could think of it as something happening now in her life, and that way she did remember some things.

By being close between ages, I could talk to her and she could talk to me about some of her problems. It was more like her being a younger sister.

I had a problem once. I was shy, too, like she is and we both tried to bring each other out.

Finally, one older worked with a boy in shop who had never completed an assignment. This is how the older described what he did:

I would let him see how I was going about it and then he would become anxious to get the file from me so he could do what I was doing. This was when I noticed he was beginning to perk up. I think it was the help that inspired him to work. He'd work on Tuesday and Thursday when I wasn't there. I could tell if and when he had

done something just by leaving a little nick in something Monday and coming back Wednesday and finding it out. He did most of it by himself. I remember when he got his grade. He had a great big grin all over his entire face. He acted like it was his first "A" in shop. It was!

C. Competence of the olders

1. Background of the high school olders

- a. Academic average - The average overall grade point average was 2.6; 80% of the class had overall GPA's between 2.0 and 3.0.
- b. College plans - Twenty-six out of the twenty-nine said they expected to go to college.

2. Skill demands at the various levels

- a. Subject matter skills - In general, the higher the grade of the younger, the more it was necessary for the older to have subject matter skill. In the primary grades, much of the help given has to do with administering drills: Spelling drills, arithmetic drills, and reading-aloud drills. In the higher grades, the emphasis is either on getting the younger to acquire problem-solving skills or to learn how to comprehend what he has read. Since the subject matter is more sophisticated in the highest grades, the skills required to enable another to master the subject matter is also greater.
- b. Interpersonal skills - The elementary school younger has a small vocabulary and cannot express himself as well as his older. Simultaneously, he is quite at ease being

dependent on adults. Thus, older helping at this level need patience, but they will usually receive good cooperation. By the time the younger has reached junior high school, his vocabulary is no longer a limiting factor. He is much more capable of doing things outside of school without the help of adults and he is beginning to resent adult controls. Sometimes he acts as if to demonstrate that he can function without and even in spite of adults. For this and a whole variety of other reasons, going to school is a highly frustrating experience for many junior and senior high school students. Often, when they encounter difficulty in their academic work, they try to convince themselves that the school is at fault. They become anti-school and potential dropouts.

The younger who has some of these factors operating presents a challenge to the older. But even though this type of younger is difficult to handle, he represents one of the best candidates for potential gain from the older-younger learning situation. His older must be skilled: He must have a good command of the subject matter, he must be taught to understand the reasons why the younger is experiencing difficulty, he must be able to "speak his language," and he must serve as an appropriate student model. If such a younger is paired with a skilled older, the chances are good the younger will make a major gain.

3. The ability of the olders to meet the various skill demands
- a. In elementary school - There is no doubt about the complete success of olders helping in elementary school. Here are some comments from the assistant principals:

It's amazing to me when I walk down the hallway to see these junior high students working with a group of children...I've never gone by one time that I've ever seen anything going on but strictly business...I've never seen junior high students operate like that with youngsters.

I didn't realize at the beginning that olders could make such a positive contribution. I would definitely like to see this project continued in our building...after you have left.

- b. In junior and senior high school - Many olders make a real contribution as evidenced by highly positive comments from both junior high and senior high teachers; yet problems occurred. Here are comments which illustrate the extremes possible:

One of my olders did not seem mature enough about her work. Her first younger asked to be taken out of the project, although in fairness, I think it was as much the younger's fault as the older's. But the older was more playful than her partner (the other older) and less inclined to follow instructions.

The older student I received was known by many of the younger students outside of school. On two or three occasions, work sessions turned into fun sessions with little work being accomplished. Little preparation was done outside class by the older student. She relied heavily on me giving day-to-day instruction. This took some class time away--five minutes per period. We talked about arranging an after school period to work out preparations--it never materialized! After two weeks, the older student began missing her tutoring period. It was later found that she had been skipping and spending her time elsewhere in the building. She was then removed from the project.

One of my olders is too "flip" and far too temperamental for this sort of work. She dishes out criticism but is too immature to accept it without feeling mistrusted. The other older is an ardent fan of the first and, consequently, winds up sharing her views. The ability of both girls leaves something to be desired. I would not work with them again. We clash terribly.

Except in these three unfortunate situations, the receiving teachers were pleased with the olders assigned to them. A few, however, found their older's academic background a little weak. Here are some of the teachers' comments:

I found one of my olders to be a willing worker and eager to help less able students. Furthermore, she followed my lesson plans and instructions to the best of her ability. In regard to her academic preparation, I must say I was less favorably impressed.

One of my olders registers with me as having a great deal of quiet enthusiasm. She shows a sincere interest in her work. She seems to have a sound knowledge of her subject and is willing to follow instructions. The other had very little difficulty in working with the youngers. She was genuinely interested in her younger and displayed much patience when working with a younger with a personality problem. She also knew the subject matter.

The boy assigned to me has been very helpful in this experience. He had the patience (which was so important with the student he tutored) and interest to try to relate to his student. He was very receptive in trying new approaches as well as following the prescribed assignments. Most of all his willingness and stamina made a remarkable impression on the younger.

My older came each meeting being both prepared and enthusiastic. Much of what she did showed imagination and a willingness beyond what I had expected. The youngers she worked with benefitted and seemed downhearted when she left.

Both olders were well prepared academically to tutor seventh grade pupils. Both showed a marked interest and willingness to learn teaching techniques. They also demonstrated an unusual ability to follow out instructions.

- c. Recommendation - In junior and senior high school, teachers should at least be allowed to give selection criteria (e.g., at least two years of high school English with a grade of "B"). Better yet, show them the class roster and allow them to select their former students. Further, teachers and prospective olders, before the assignments are finalized, should make sure that they can schedule regular weekly conferences.

D. Effects of the project on the olders

1. What they missed when tutoring - Because both the junior and senior high school olders were in an ad hoc class for which they received academic credit, none of them missed out or got behind on any course work. The elementary school olders, because of the structure of elementary schools, could not be assigned to a permanent ad hoc class without missing some of their regular class time. But the assistant principals and sending teachers didn't seem to feel that the olders they sent suffered from being out of the classrooms. Here is what they said:

It hasn't harmed any of our olders' class work to be out of class helping.

Overall, none of these olders helping youngers has missed anything that hasn't been more than compensated for by the experience.

They haven't suffered one bit in lessons in the homeroom. They go out to help during spelling period. Their scores have remained exactly on the same level, which is good. I asked them how they were able to manage. One works at home. One takes time after finishing other subjects.

2. Effects noted by the seminar leaders

Some students never understood children before. They thought of children as getting in the way. Now all of a sudden they were looking at them as people. Some told me their younger brothers and sisters stopped being so obnoxious to them and started being human again. A few actually decided to become teachers as a result of this.

The girls who take attendance in the office as a result of being in this program now seem to have a feeling of belonging to the school and liking to be of service to it. They have showed added rapport with faculty in their contacts through the attendance office.

Better grooming.

My olders show growth in themselves in confidence as people.

I think this has done a great deal in making my olders feel useful and needed; it has helped to bring out their personalities.

A boy who was an attendance problem began to report into school and always attended the seminars. He liked being identified with these children who were helping.

3. Effects noted by the high school olders themselves

- a. On their ideas about teaching - Some indicated that they learned teaching techniques. Quite a few were impressed with the degree to which teaching requires forethought, patience, and understanding. As a result of their experiences, some were attracted to teaching as a career, others strengthened their previous decisions to become teachers; one actually changed her mind. Here is some of what they said:

You sit there thinking "I wish she'd answer--I asked her about ten minutes ago," but you have to be patient. You have to let her take her time. As long as she answers it, that's the main thing--as long as she gets it out.

Teaching is not for me: It requires too much patience!

Teaching isn't something to be taken for granted; being able to regulate yourself to the younger is a basic essential.

It has taught me to understand better the teacher's point of view.

One girl strengthened her determination to enter a related field. She said:

I want to be a social worker. This Olders-Youngers project has brought me closer to realizing what social work really is. You read about social work in the books, but it is not the same as really experiencing it and being with people you enjoy being with and people you feel you are really helping.

- b. On their ideas about youngers - The olders were often surprised about what a younger child's world is like. They felt they gained insight into the problems youngers of all ages face. For example, some never realized that someone else might have difficulty doing what they considered easy. They became aware of the disadvantages that the slow child has in school, that youngers can become easily discouraged and resentful, and that they dislike being made conspicuous. Here are some of their more interesting comments:

I learned that everybody has a problem. Like in school, you see kids, and everything looks so nice and rosy, and deep down they really have problems you never noticed before.

I have a sister 7, a nephew 9, and two nieces, one 4, the other 4 months. I feel that now I have an understanding of their behavior, problems, and abilities. Now, I feel qualified to assist them with schoolwork.

Well, I have learned this one thing--that children will sure fool you. Because this child had me fooled, I thought she wasn't smart at all until I started working with her and found out the problem.

I learned that each child is unique. He's different.

I learned a great deal about children younger than myself. I found out that getting attention means a lot to them when no one really took time or interest in them.

Because I have no sisters or brothers, I enjoy and appreciate younger children more than others may. I may be a little more sympathetic or maybe even less so, but I enjoy younger children and you can learn a lot from them, because they are less aware of society, less inhibited and feel free to say what's on their minds.

- c. On themselves - Some said they were now more considerate of younger children's feelings, that they had become more patient, that they had learned how to get along with others better, that they felt useful, and that because of the clear expectations of their receiving teachers, they gained confidence in themselves. Here are some of their comments:

One thing I found out about myself, I am very self-centered. By working with my younger, I started hoping he would improve. I understand he had problems, and that I should try to understand them.

I learned to get along with others by (1) becoming their friend, (2) respecting them, (3) not trying to act superior, and (4) listening and sometimes doing what they suggested.

I have a better outlook on different things.

I learned how to get along with people younger than myself and older, also. I can practically talk to anyone, which is quite a change for me, because I just don't have anything to say to strangers, no matter how old they are.

I wish I could do this next year just to be a helper of some kind. I will miss going over to Roosevelt to see the smile on my learner's face, telling me he is ready to receive any help I can give of myself.

E. The olders' suggestions for improving the course

One older suggested inviting a child psychologist to the class. Another pointed out that physics and biology labs last two periods and felt the course could be improved by having some of their in-the-field time extended. They could use the time to observe the receiving teacher in action or for other research projects. Many suggested that the course should last for two semesters. One commented:

I would improve this course by letting it be continued throughout the schools in the United States, or even by having more students to become interested in it.

III. The Receiving Teachers (Teachers who received olders to help their youngsters)

A. Selection criteria - All receiving teachers were involved on a voluntary basis. In the elementary school, an explanation of the project was presented to the entire faculty. Those who were interested then submitted their names. In the junior and senior high schools, the seminar leaders explained the project to selected teachers. The teachers were then given the choice whether or not to be involved.

B. Their reactions to the project

1. Problems faced - Several problems demand mention; the last three are faced primarily by junior and senior high teachers:

- a. A very real problem faced by receiving teachers is finding the extra time required by the project. The teachers, on the average, spend an hour a week outside of school: about half an hour preparing the assignment for the older to carry out with the younger and about half an hour for the conference with the older about the assignment to cover, the progress made, and the problems encountered. Most teachers were successfully able to find the time. When asked what they would say to colleagues who were considering volunteering to be involved in the project, several advised: Make sure you can give the time necessary to be really satisfied with the results.
- b. Some teachers felt the need to have more communication with those running the project: The University of Michigan staff and the seminar leaders. They felt that had they had the chance to ask more questions and trade some of their experiences once the project was in motion, they would have been able to contribute more to the growth of both their youngers and their elders. The University of Michigan staff had the same feelings but were highly reluctant to ask teachers to attend more than the minimum necessary meetings. We now realize we would have been able to hold voluntary meetings, and we plan to do so in the

future. Even after the project is permanently established, there ought to be periodic voluntary meetings between the receiving teachers and the seminar leaders who train their olders.

- c. A few teachers mentioned the problem of space for the tutoring sessions. Practically everyone had the tutoring take place either in the classroom or right outside in the hall. A few, however, would have felt better if a supervised room were available for this purpose. Certainly one such room could accommodate many older-younger pairs.
- d. A few had a desire to see their olders at work but didn't want to take class time to do it. Other teachers solved this problem by assigning their class written work whenever they wanted to observe what the older and younger were doing.
- e. A few lacked confidence in their olders because they felt the olders' academic background was inadequate. In the future, preventative steps will be taken: The receiving teachers will be shown a list of the olders participating in the project. Those who recognize successful former students will be allowed to request them. If, however, a receiving teacher discovers that an older is inadequately prepared, he should discuss with the seminar leader the possibility of transferring the older to another receiving teacher.

f. A few receiving teachers noted that their olders were not sufficiently reliable. In some cases, olders failed to show up to scheduled conferences. In others, where olders had been asked to do outside work as preparation, some had not done so. In such cases, the teacher ought to address the problem directly. First, he should check with the older to determine whether the older perceived the request as reasonable (of course, outside work should be seen as part of their regular psychology class assignments). The goal of this kind of confrontation should be as follows: Either we can agree that there are certain reasonable commitments you (the older) must make to ensure that the younger will make satisfactory progress, or we must agree that this is not a suitable assignment for you. In the former case, we should make plans so that both of us live up to our commitments (I will show up on time and not ask you to do any more than what is absolutely necessary; you will arrive on time and keep ahead of the younger). In the latter case, we should check with your seminar leader to determine if another placement is available which requires less outside work.

2. Satisfaction derived

Teachers talked about changing their opinions about junior and senior high school students; they were very pleased about the new way in which they now saw them. They said they were happy that some of their students were receiving the individual attention they always knew they needed.

They brought some of the papers that had been done well by their youngers as a result of receiving help and showed them to the assistant principals with pride. They were able to post children's papers who had never done well enough to have any of their papers displayed. Finally, besides experiencing a real sense of satisfaction from watching their own students grow, some commented that they knew they had made a contribution to the olders who were helping them, and this is clearly true from what the olders said themselves.

IV. The Seminar Leaders

A. Selection criteria

1. The elementary school - The two assistant principals were chosen to be seminar leaders. This worked very well, but for an elementary school which cannot spare an assistant principal, two alternatives exist: (1) the visiting teacher if she is not already overloaded; and (2) a fifth or sixth grade teacher provided he or she is sending his entire class.

2. The junior high school - One of the two assistant principals and one of the counselors were chosen to be seminar leaders. Both men were constantly confronted with other pressing and urgent business. They discovered they could not always be available for scheduled seminars with the olders. Even when they were able to meet with the olders, it was difficult for them to find adequate planning time. Both men believed in the aims of the project and they were pleased with the results they observed. Both felt, however, that due to the demands of their other work, they ought not to take on additional responsibility.

From what we know about junior high schools across the country, the situation in Durfee is not atypical. Twelve years old, and thirteen and fourteen years old are volatile ages. At no other time is the gap between the maturity of the boy and the maturity of the girl greater. Some children of each sex are undergoing rapid physical changes, others notice this is happening to their friends but not to them. They begin experiencing feelings they do not understand. The new adolescent worries about many things: Can I control my impulses? Am I normal? He tries to pretend he is not troubled; but occasionally he gets into trouble. The counselors and administrative staff have their hands full. They ought to be on call whenever possible. It is for these reasons that it is not appropriate for the men and women filling these critical positions to be assigned the responsibility of being a seminar leader.

This coming semester, a teacher has been asked to take on the project as a class. The participating olders receive credit. One day a week, she meets with the olders for the seminar; the remaining days at that time each older meets with his younger. This idea is being tried out because it has been so successful in the high school. To date, it is working out well,

3. The senior high school - One of the two psychology teachers was asked to take on this project as the main activity of the course. The class had already started meeting and the students had each bought a textbook. The psychology teacher used the text on one day out of each week. During the other four, she ran the project: Three days in the field tutoring, one day in class for the seminar. Setting up the experience as a class for credit solved the problem which had existed in the junior high school. The psychology teacher was able to spend the necessary time preparing the plans, leading the seminars, and supervising the field work.

B. Their reactions to the project

1. Problems faced

- a. Time - We have already mentioned the time problem for the junior high seminar leaders. In addition to this, there was the problem of finding time for the seminar leader training sessions. We ended up meeting with the seminar leaders for a total of six hours, mostly after school for about an hour and a quarter a week. (We later concluded that we should have asked for a total of eight hours.) After school was a satisfactory time for everyone.
- b. Seminar materials - Some of the seminar leaders felt the need for structured materials to use with their olders in addition to the lesson plan with which they began the seminar. The major portion of the late seminars was spent solving problems that came up and exchanging techniques that worked well. We plan to develop materials for this purpose.
- c. Coordinator - The seminar leaders, particularly in the junior high school, but also in the senior high school, felt the need to have someone in the school system be responsible for coordinating the entire project. This person would handle scheduling problems, receive the names of absent olders, and receive notice of any problems needing attention. Currently, this role is being filled by the seminar leaders and The University of Michigan staff.

2. Comments on early reservations - As the project began, the seminar leaders had two important reservations. One was that the scheduling problems might be impossible to overcome. The other was that the idea was a sound one, but that it was too time consuming to be practical. Here is what was said at the end of the semester:

The program works out better than it sounds.

The teachers don't want to spend too much of their time and they know now it doesn't require too much time.

The Board of Education might want to consider this as an overall project.

3. Satisfactions derived - The seminar leaders received two important kinds of satisfactions. They reported that teachers brought them papers done by previously unsuccessful youngers to show how much the olders had accomplished. They could see the olders develop as a result of their participation in the project. One seminar leader commenting about this said:

This is a chance to watch your own students take pride in themselves--to see them grow professionally. It did something for me when I saw them maturing.

Finally, some of the seminar leaders told us that this experience had provided a growth experience for them. It had given them some new techniques, sharpened their old ones, and caused them to try out new ways of doing other parts of their jobs.

V. Summary

The Olders-Youngers project is providing the willing teacher with a new way to cope with some of the different learning needs she recognizes in her classroom. Not only does she derive satisfaction from utilizing her diagnostic skills and watching her youngers improve, but the youngers

themselves gain from the experience. The gains are striking in the area of academic achievement, but in many ways the positive shifts in attitudes toward learning and toward themselves are more important. The olders too grow from the experience. At a time when they are most concerned about whether they are worth anything at all, they can experience concrete evidence that they are useful and important to others: Both younger children and adults.

The project, as executed during the first semester, has aspects which need further refinement. Most noticeable is the assignment-of-olders process. The receiving teachers understandably want to work with olders who are qualified to carry out their instructions. The other need is for more communication among the receiving teachers and the seminar leaders. They need to be aware of the problems each is facing and what is being done about them. They also have a desire to share experiences and trade ideas that have worked out well. These and other problems which have been met are discussed in this report. We have suggested solutions and will try them out in the coming semester.

In our opinion, the comments and observations of those who responded to our questionnaires and interviews demonstrate that the project has considerable merit. It remains to be seen whether it can be instituted on a permanent basis without outside support.